

# PERSONALITIES OF AUTHORS AND OF ARTISTS

## Self-Portrait of an Art Critic

AUTHORS AND I.—ART AND I. Two Volumes. By C. Lewis Hinds. John Lane Company.

Reviewed by WILLIS STEELL.

Let us proceed serially, although the choice of authors first may be arbitrary. They number sixty, and it is human to envy the writer of this book, an acquaintance that includes authors so diverse as Gabriele d'Annunzio and O. Henry. The envy rather dies out when the envier discovers that Mr. Hinds has in many instances not so much as a bowing acquaintance with the worthies in his volume of short but genial memories.

One of these instances is Henry Adams, who opens the book. Mr. Hinds asks himself: "Did I ever meet Henry Adams? Perhaps so; he was a cosmopolitan." Richard Harding Davis he saw but a minute in the dusk when inquiring what he was doing on a stranger's lawn. "The handsome gentleman, in a firm voice, replied as if his five words explained everything: 'I am Richard Harding Davis.'"

Another author whom Mr. Hinds saw but momentarily was William de Morgan. Going into a shop in Chelsea to buy a penknife he noticed an elderly gentleman in consultation with the proprietor, who volunteered information about him. And as for Gabriele d'Annunzio, Mr. Hinds sat near enough his table in the dining room of the Hotel Daniele in Venice to hear the hard-aviator talk.

Thus if C. Lewis Hinds did not in every case actually pluck the rose he sometimes came within range of its perfume. With Henry James he touched the petals, for according to his own testimony he had tea with the large, solemn author of "The Spoils of Poynton" in the charming house at Rye.

The novelist seems to have given his guest a ponderous welcome (but an excellent if somewhat informal "tea"), and the conversation occasionally lapsed. Once when this happened Mr. Hinds praised the canary. "Yes—er," countered Henry James, "and the little creature sings his songs of gratitude and admiration with—er—the slightest modicum of encouragement from—er—me."

With time on one's hands—a rainy Sunday afternoon, for instance—this volume of random recollections, revelations of personal likings and dislikes, here and there a pungent criticism, an anecdote, a bit of gossip, ought to be a cheery companion. The author regrets mildly that he is 3,000 miles away from his own library, and when he wishes to refresh his memory of an author or his books he is forced to go to the Fifty-eighth street branch of the Public Library and borrow them. It seems to be a labor of love with him to curl away (in a taxi) as many volumes of an author as he can lay his hands on and religiously read them over at his own fireside.

Mr. Hinds refers to himself as a "book man." The definition, in the face of what he has written, does not define. But no one will deny that he is an omnivorous reader. He was at one time editor of *The Academy*.

Where there was so much authentic knowledge of authors to be drawn on as this writer evidently holds in his

mind, it may be thought that these were sufficient to make a book of pleasant recollections, without—as James might have said, padding. Other people who passed Tennyson in the country road, or caught sight of Kipling going into his porch in "a garden hat," may take heart from this book and write their recollections. Mr. Hinds is not sure, but thinks he was once a fellow guest at dinner of Walter Pater. The uncertainty is worth a couple of pages, or gets them, anyway.

Now, Mr. Hinds's admiring critic can tell a better story around this original talent. As a youth of twenty who gazed transfixed by Titian's Venus in the *Accademia* in Venice he heard a hoarse whisper over his shoulder which said: "Clothed on with Chastity!"

The whisperer, a short, stocky figure with a red face and green eyes behind glasses and wearing, that very hot day, a pair of deep red kid gloves, said no more but strolled away. Several times thereafter the youth saw him in the Piazza, but nobody knew who he was. The next fall when the young traveler had got as far north as Oxford he found people there on the qui vive for the first lecture of the season in the famous library because Walter Pater was to deliver it.

The day arrived, and who should come on the platform but the "Clothed on with Chastity" stranger. He unfolded his manuscript, turned the pages, moved his lips, but apparently no sound issued. Then, noticing a restlessness among his audience (mostly females), Walter Pater advanced to the front of the stage and said in the recognizable hoarse whisper: "Can you all hear me?"

In his second edition of "Authors and I," Mr. Hinds is welcome to add this anecdote to his Pater recollections. It has never been printed before.

"Art and I," the twin of the other volume, merits a more serious treatment. It is, like its mate, easy and pleasant reading, but the personal notes sound more sure. That may be easily accounted for. Modern writers, some of them, are still Shakespearean enough to keep themselves out of their books; pictures are more self-revealing. A painting hangs on the wall to be studied at length and at any season; a self-respecting author refuses to be hung on a wall, though he may be put on the shelf without loss of caste.

Throughout this volume, which does not need a blue ribbon round its neck to distinguish it from its twin, the loving study of pictures is apparent and the author's open soul has been rewarded with lively enjoyment that spreads out to the reader. He was not born with a sneer on his lips, says Mr. Hinds, and he is eager to learn about post impressionism, cubism and later forms that have taken the places of these. When he sees an artist striving to recover the "childish" view, by which he means the direct view, this author and picture lover delights to follow him. No eccentricity repels him and the names of Degas, Cezanne, Gauguin, Van Gogh, Picasso, Picabia, Mattioli are in his list of masters. He finds delight also in Augustus John and so on down to or up to Rockwell Kent, Walt Kuhn and Ryder. He even sat to Wolmark, and in spite of his

modesty it is plain enough he admires the portrait.

A charming bit of prose is the account of his first glimpse of Gauguin when he encountered the "Red Dog" canvas over the mantel at Maresco Pearce's; but equally charming is his account of his pleasure in Fragonard's golden "First Kiss." Indeed, a more all-

round "liker" it would be hard to find in the annals of art. But it must be added that while his sympathies are extraordinarily developed he always has a reason for his liking. In the chapters devoted to the art education of "Mr. X," the author is able to tell what he does not like without offending any reader.

## This Detective Was a Clue Finder

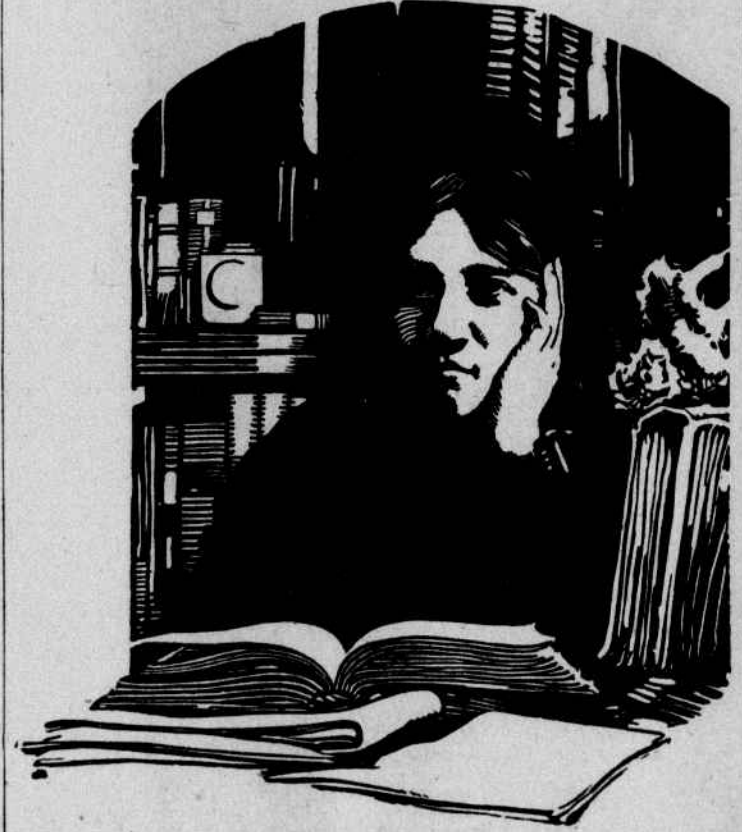
THAT AFFAIR AT "THE CEDARS." By Lee Thayer. Doubleday, Page & Co.

After reading one of Mrs. Thayer's novels the reviewer feels inclined to watch for her next. The narrative moves swiftly, with a new thrill in nearly every page. The technique is admirable and the book has a finish that is often lacking in the quickly written mystery novel. The plot is original and clever; the end a surprise.

The character delineation, though subordinated to the demands of the

The story opens with the return of Billy Wainwright, who has been missing in the war and was given up for dead. In the meantime Billy's fiancée, Betty, had married Raymond Austin to please her mother, because he was fabulously rich. Raymond finds Billy and Betty together. The next afternoon while the Austins' guests are having tea on the terrace a shot is heard and Austin is discovered dead in the library.

At the first glance it seems like suicide, and this verdict is given at the



Mrs. Lee Thayer.

narrative, is keen and humorous. The author has the subtle gift of making the reader understand the inner processes of her people, whether they be good or bad. Even the villain is left to reveal himself, not being branded with a red hot poker of righteous indignation by the author. He is a dashing adventurer whose heroic qualities inspire admiration in spite of the unscrupulous and cold blooded manner in which he commits murder.

Mrs. Thayer catches the breezy atmosphere of Long Island country life and her nature touches are vivid.

coroner's inquest. But Peter Clancy, a detective who is accidentally brought in on the case, finds evidence that makes him suspect a murder. He resolves for the sake of justice to track down the guilty person. Wainwright is the man naturally suspected, but as he digs deeper into the mystery Peter finds other clues that involve three people. They all seem to have been on the spot at the same time. To tell more of how he unravelled the tangle and how he stalked the murderer to his last stand would be giving away the story.

## He Goes Over the Top Again

THE MADONNA OF THE HILLS. By Guy Empey. Harper & Bros.

Mr. Empey certainly whoops over the top again in some respects in this, his first novel. It is a hectic thriller, with enough screen material in it to make half a dozen film serials. It is something of an anachronism, a reversion to a type once more familiar than it is to-day—that is, the yellow backed penny dreadful of thirty or forty years ago, though it has some modern improvements. Here and there is a suggestion of realism, of the Theodore Dreiser kind, that wouldn't have passed the censor of a generation ago, but is common enough nowadays. And, incidentally, these bits are the best of the book. He also resembles Dreiser—remotely—in his curious occasional mishandling of the long suffering English language.

From the opening scene to the very end (404 pages of it) the villain still pursues her: villains of assorted varieties, and two leading ladies, with a few minor victims en passant. Virtue has a desperately hard time of it, and—contrary to old fashioned rules—doesn't always triumph. As to that, its moralities are a bit complex, and the heroine's final solution leaves one in serious doubts as to her living happily ever after.

It is equipped with a prologue of eight chapters, dealing with the heroine's mother, Mollie Eastman first. She is a vaudeville actress, and he has her tread at the outset, and proceeds to throw stones at her with such persistence that she decides to come down and abandon the hard paths of virtue. But she is mercifully killed in a taxicab accident before the sacrifice is complete and leaves her daughter, Mollie the second, 3 years old, as a waif on the East Side of New York. But the child falls into good hands, grows up happily, and inheriting her mother's beauty, wonderful voice and taste for the footlights—and also her capacity for getting into trouble—she starts out as a cabaret singer, advancing to the vaudeville stage. The rest of the story is a series of lurid episodes, involving the lovely Mollie, crooks, "coke fiends," corrupt police, gamblers, &c., and the underworld in general. One loses count of the crimes en route. After successfully ducking most pursuers Mollie finally succumbs to the worst of the lot, a gambler and political boss, goes to live with him, and aids him in his gambling house until she makes the surprising discovery that he is running a "race game" and that she is being used as a decoy. How she happened to overlook these trifles at first is not fully clear.

In her horror of these discoveries she begins to see things clearly, and runs away to a distant country village, where she is to function as the

Madonna of the hills for a wandering artist. Here she falls in love with the village parson and ends by marrying him after the gambler, Davis, has been properly murdered by one Rat Morgan. She leaves the parson in ignorance of her past. Perhaps Mr. Empey intends a sequel to set forth the troubles that result from her. In spite of its inflated, sometimes absurd melodrama the story holds one's attention, and has some scenes of real dramatic quality.

## Her Furnace Man, Her Cook, Her Dog

SHEILA AND OTHERS. By Winifred Cotter. E. P. Dutton & Co.

Reviewed by HELEN AVERIL.

One lays aside this little book of essays saying to oneself: "What a delightful woman! And what fun she has had writing her book!" One feels a sense of personal acquaintance not only with the author but with the characters she has introduced—her cooks, her furnace man, her "wash-ladies," her poll parrot and her dog Keddo (oh, the delightful pup-ness of that pup!).

There is blue eyed, bright haired, warm hearted Irish Sheila, with Abel Goodfriend, "rugged, homely and kind, the viselike grip of his horny hand extended in annual welcome with the light of the honest blue eyes above it looking straightforwardly into your own, like the very incarnation of Nature herself guaranteeing another season's harvest of benefactions."

Even through the author's effective magic are we able to visualize the vacuum cleaner agent, who both expatiated upon and illustrated the importance of "charm of manner" in salesmanship, and queried the attraction of what he called "the intellectual life" when, as he said, he could make a much better living selling vacuum cleaners, save money, support a wife and read "nearly all of Wells" and Huxley (verily, James Huxley!) and have fun all along the line.

We are glad to read the confession that the essayist was quite unable to answer him. "It was these assailing questions," she says, "this revelation that staggered me, that rendered me dumb." Almost any one leading the intellectual life to-day is dumb before the poignancy of these questions.

With a sense of humor and a sympathetic understanding of people, Mrs. Cotter uses the simple material of her household life, and contrives somehow to punch a window in the side walls of humdrum domestic living through which to catch refreshing glimpses of

wider landscapes of thought and feeling.

For instance, of her dog she writes: "It is hard to realize what a flood of light upon our own complex motives and impulsive elementary intelligences can impart. It is almost startling. In Keddo's artless ways one gets a glimmer of inflections operative much higher up the scale. One was humbled by knowledge indirectly gleaned."

"His buoyancy, his trust, his spontaneous happiness—was it because he didn't know that his little spark of life lay between such great gulfs of darkness? Is knowledge then a deterrent, and not to be wished for? One felt in the light of this small manufacturer of boundless happiness out of life's commonest furnishings ashamed of one's own daily vintage of care and perplexities."

Stevenson would have liked that last sentiment.

## Plays in Rhyme

TWO MOTHERS. By John G. Nehardt. The Macmillan Company.

Rhymed verse in drama is the difficult form in which the poet Nehardt presents two poignant stories of mothers. The wisdom of his choice may be questioned, and the question will be left undecided by a reading of the two plays, for deftness and even more than skill are shown in the handling. Nevertheless, there are crudities that mar the effect of poetry which might have been avoided had the author chosen the blank verse form, dramatic poetry's great inheritance.

Both these one act plays have appeared before in magazines and the first one, which is called "Eight Hundred Rubles," has been told already in prose. The present version proves that this story belongs to poetry. It pretends to less than the play "Ariippina," which fills out the little book, and is more successful partly by reason of this modesty. In the Roman play exception might well be taken to the poet's vocabulary, that seems a little weak and thin where gorgeousness was to be expected. The ugly word "bliss" was, it would appear from its frequent use, to have been a common one in Nero's court.

"Ariippina" becomes great poetry in the last scene, where the daughter of Germanicus, swept by passion of mother love, rejects the thought of leading the legionaries in revolt against the evil son whose plot to rid himself of her by drowning had failed.

## Bird Apartments In the Giant Cactus

BIRDS OF THE PAPAGO SAGUARO NATIONAL MONUMENT, ARIZONA. By H. S. Swarth. Department of the Interior. Washington: Government Printing Office.

The word "monument" suggests a stone shaft. But this one is simply a tract of land set aside "to conserve certain types of desert vegetation in a region that is rapidly changing in appearance through increased cultivation of the soil. It is near Phoenix, Ariz., and not far from the Roosevelt Bird Reservation on the shores of Roosevelt Lake.

Whatever influence conserves vegetation keeps the birds as well. The plant growth of this region is of the sparse desert character—cactus and the creosote bush, with arrow weeds and bushes about the water.

The giant cactus takes the place of trees, and like the palm of Eastern countries, supports whole populations of wild life. Among the species that depend upon it for food or home or both are: Saguaro screech owl, elf owl, Gila woodpecker, Mearns gilded flicker, Western red tailed hawk, Swallow hawk, ash throated flycatcher, purple martin and housefinch. Even a mourning dove has been found sitting upon its eggs in a gouged out cavity of the cactus.

"The labor of excavating the nesting holes must necessarily fall entirely upon the gilded flicker and Gila



The Tree of the Desert.

woodpecker—probably upon the former for the most part; for these are the only birds with the skill and equipment for such labors. Do these woodpeckers of their own choice construct new dwellings year after year, leaving last year's homes to their unskilled neighbors, or are they unfortunate drudges, frequently compelled by more belligerent associates to abandon their completed work? However this may be, the exigencies of the situation frequently bring about an apartment-house like condition, with several diverse tenants living in close proximity, one above the other."

## New Books

Fiction.

A CASE IN CAMERA—By Oliver Onions. Macmillan.

THE UNSEEN BAR—By Natalie Sumner Lincoln. Appleton.

GROWTH OF SOIL—By Knut Hamsun. Translated by W. W. Worster. In two volumes. Knopf.

THE TILER'S JEWEL—By Harlan H. Ballard. Stratford.

WHITE DOMINOES—By Florence M. Pettie. Reilly & Lee.

History and Public Affairs.

WHAT HAPPENED AT JUTLAND: THE TACTICS OF THE BATTLE—By C. C. Gill. Doran.

Political Science.

THE EVOLUTION OF REVOLUTION—By H. M. Hyndman. Boni & Livright.

Religion.

THE PROBLEM OF CHRISTIAN UNITY—By various writers. Macmillan.

Travel.

THE GEOGRAPHY OF GENIUS—By James W. Lee. Revell.

Health.

HOW THE MIND CURES—By George F. Butler. Knopf.

A TEXTBOOK OF GYMNASIUMS—By K. A. Knudsen. Lippincott.

VITALIC BREATHING—By Thomas R. Gaines. Reilly & Lee.

Juvenile.

THE BOY WHO LOST HIS NAME—By Christine Ware. Abingdon Press.

THE BOOK OF CHILDREN'S GAMES—By Constance Wakeford Long. Dutton.

Musical.

SHORT STORIES IN THE NATURE OF MUSIC—By Herbert Antcliffe. Dutton.

SONGS OF TWO SAVOYARDS—Words by W. S. Gilbert. Music by Arthur Sullivan. Dutton.

Outdoors.

CAMPING AND WOODCRAFT—By Horace Kephart. New edition. Macmillan.

Writers and Writing.

A SHORT HISTORY OF RUSSIAN LITERATURE—Translated from the Russian of Shakhnovskii by Serge Tomkeyeff. Dutton.

Miscellaneous.

THE ENGLISH VILLAGE CHURCH—By Alfred Hopkins. William Heinemann, Inc.

THE UNIVERSITY IN OVERALLS—By Alfred Fitzpatrick. Toronto: Frontier College.

PRACTICAL BANK OPERATION—Prepared by L. H. Langston. Two volumes. Ronald Press.

CONJURING TRICKS—By A. H. Walker and Horace Walker. Dutton.

ANIMAL FOODSTUFFS—By E. W. Shanahan. Dutton.

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